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1-2014

# ARTZ 105A.04: Visual Language - Drawing

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## Recommended Citation

Louks, James P, "ARTZ 105A.04: Visual Language - Drawing" (2014). *Syllabi*. 1121.  
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The University of Montana, *School of Art*  
**ARTZ 105A: Visual Language: Drawing, 3 Credits, Spring Semester 2014**  
Tuesday/Thursday, 5:10 pm-7:00 pm, Fine Arts 401

Prerequisite Courses: None

Instructor: James Louks (james.louks@umontana.edu)  
Office: Schreiber Gym 127 (Graduate Painting Studios)  
Office Hours: Thursday, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

*"Art goes on in the head."* Damien Hirst

**Course Materials:** A kit for the class will be available to students at the University Bookstore. These kits should be available during the second week of the semester. Students will also be required to purchase a sketchbook (9" x 12" is a good size), a drawing board (\$7.75) and an optional portfolio (\$5.25). These can be purchased from the University Bookstore. The instructor and the School of Art will attempt to provide any additional materials but students are encouraged to purchase any other materials/supplies they feel that they might need to complete the assignments for the course.

**Course Description from Catalogue:** The foundations program prepares students for further study in the arts by introducing skills and strategies important for creative visual expression. Students develop an understanding of how formal language, material sensibilities and a wide range of art practices can articulate content and express ideas. The program also establishes craft and work expectations while encouraging creative risk, experimentation and cross-media solutions. This coordinated introductory curriculum of five classes spans all areas of the studio and art history experience and introduces students to a full range of disciplines for possible future study. Foundations classes are designed to be taken at the beginning of a student's course of study, and are prerequisite for most other art courses.

**Course Objectives and Description:** The objective of this course is to introduce the student to the tools and techniques that are essential to the development, both technically and conceptually, to the act of drawing. By the end of term, the student will become familiar with the elements of drawing, explore artistic work and theory and develop a visual literacy through creating compositions that reflect an understanding of both form and content. The course will focus on specific elements of art and students will develop an understanding of their meaning and the possibilities inherent in their use. These include, but are not limited to: *Line, Shape, Value, Volume, Perspective, Gesture, Negative and Positive Space, Direct Observation, Scale and Control of Media*. As we progress through the semester, we will use these basic elements to explore more elaborate ideas of composition and design: *Movement, Exaggeration, Measurement, Spatial Analysis, Plane, Modeling, Illusion, Flatness, Linear Perspective, Viewer Positioning, Concept and Composition*. Throughout the course, students' intellectual engagement will be encouraged. I am much more interested in your thoughts and ideas more than your technical proficiency.

**Course Format:** This course will employ the instructional methods of studio practice, lectures and critiques with an opportunity for guest speakers and gallery visits. The assignments in this course are designed to enhance one's knowledge of media selections, compositional arrangement and, most importantly, conceptual development, which ultimately prepares the student for upper level art courses.

**Attendance/Absence Policy:** This is a studio art class and therefore regular attendance is essential. Each student will be permitted **3 unexcused absences**. After three unexcused absences, your grade will drop one letter grade for each day missed. **If you miss more than 6 classes it will be impossible for you to receive anything but a failing grade (F) for the course.**

If you have a cell phone that disrupts the class or you use the phone during class time for anything unrelated to the course, it will count as an absence. Students who habitually arrive late, arrive without necessary materials, leave early or take extended breaks will also be considered absent.

**Work schedules, minor illness, oversleeping, studying for other classes, etc. are not acceptable excuses for missing class.**

When you are absent or late for a class, you are still responsible for the information and assignments presented. All presentations and readings will be posted on Moodle but In-Class demonstrations will **NOT** be repeated for the convenience of an individual student. The instructor reserves the right to review attendance problems on an individual basis.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Full Information on the Withdrawal Policy for University of Montana courses can be found at <http://www2.umt.edu/catalog/acpolpro.htm>.

**Academic Misconduct/Cheating and Plagiarism Policy:** Any evidence of academic dishonesty in this course will result in an automatic "F" for the course. To view the university's complete policy and repercussions please refer to the current UM Catalogue.

**Access/Special Needs/Disabilities:** Full information can be found at <http://www.umt.edu/disability>. Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting the instructor. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://www.umt.edu/disability>

**Health and Safety:** The School of Art uses environmentally sound methods. Required materials from your supply list are in compliance, with the exception of spray fixative. Spray fixative is **NOT** to be used in the building at any time, other than in the spray booth. Please use fixative in the spray booth or outdoors. You are individually responsible for clean up at the end of each session in the classroom. No creatures or children will be allowed in the studios during class time or open studio times. No food or beverage containers will be allowed in the School of Art facilities while art making is in progress. All artwork must be picked up by Monday after finals week or it will be discarded.

**Building Access:** The use of studio space requires current enrollment in a specific studio course, as course fees are used to purchase supplies. Those not currently enrolled will be asked to leave. Building hours are 7:00 am to 11:00 pm daily. Fridays are open studio days in the School of Art Building---no classes are scheduled.

**Requirements and Grading Policies:** Students will be evaluated on the drawings they complete in the studio, in their sketchbooks and in the final project. In addition to evaluation of student drawings, students will be graded on participation. This includes but is not limited to: in-class discussions, working on all assigned projects in class as well as outside of class and regular attendance. While the evaluation of any artwork is always somewhat subjective, the instructor will, nonetheless, clarify to each student how successful or unsuccessful their work has met the objectives of each assignment.

**Remember, you will NOT be graded in comparison to other students in the course. You will be graded on how well you've completed the requirements of the specific assignment/project and how well you've personally progressed throughout the semester.**

**Make-up Policy:** All assignments must be done on time to receive full credit. For every day that your assignment is late, your grade for that particular assignment will be reduced by one letter. Assignments later than one week will not be accepted. If you have an extenuating circumstance preventing you from turning in an assignment on time, please see the instructor.

Extra credit assignments are **NOT** offered in this course.

**Grading Scale:** The traditional grading scale will be used for this course.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

**Detail of Assignment Point Values:**

Sketchbook Assignments	40 Points
Still Life Portfolio	20 Points
Formal Drawings	100 Points
In-Class Discussions	30 Points
Gallery/Visiting Artist Write-Ups	30 Points
In-Class Exercises	30 Points
Total	250 Points

**DETAIL OF ASSIGNMENTS**

**SKETCHBOOK ASSIGNMENTS:** Students will be required to complete 4 sketchbook assignments, each worth 10 points. These assignments will be turned in at the end of each 4 week section of the course.

**Sketchbook #1 (PROCESS):** Students will be given a drawing pencil. The assignment is to complete a work(s) by using this pencil completely, i.e., until it is completely gone.

10 Points

**Sketchbook #2 (REPETITION):** Students will choose one object and then create multiple representations of that object. 10 drawings are to be completed in 10 different mediums.

10 Points

**Sketchbook #3 (VISUAL CULTURE):** Students will write down a quote or a word widely associated with 21<sup>st</sup> century American culture. These will then be collected and passed out at random. The student will then interpret their prompt through no less than 3 drawings in any medium of their choosing.

10 Points

**Sketchbook #4 (IDENTITY):** Students will create 3 self-portraits of themselves. These portraits are not allowed to be traditional representational portraits, rather, students will collage or use non-objective techniques to craft their drawings.

10 Points

**STILL LIFE PORTFOLIO:** Students will create two drawings based on two still life compositions set up by the instructor in the drawing studio. These drawings will be used as a means to introduce students to the mediums in their drawing kits and to practice technical skills associated with rendering. The two drawings will be worth 20 points.

**FORMAL DRAWINGS:** Students will be required to complete 3 formal compositions during the course, each worth 30 points. These drawings will be turned in at the end of the final three sections of the course.

**Project #1 (PLACE):** Students will create a work/series of works that deals with the theme of place. This theme can be interpreted as literally or as abstractly as the student wishes. Traditional drawing materials are encouraged but not required to be involved in this assignment.

30 Points

**Project #2 (SOCIAL COMMENTARY):** Students will choose a social issue that they feel strongly about and then create a work/series of works that visually articulates their commentary on the issue. Traditional drawing materials are encouraged but not required to be involved in this assignment.

30 Points

**Project #3 (FINAL PROJECT-IDENTITY):** Students will design a project to complete, utilizing the skills and theoretical concepts they have learned throughout the course based on the idea of identity. This identity can be based on the self, another individual or can be a broader look at our collective culture. In addition to the formal composition, an artist statement detailing the conceptual goals of the work will be required for this assignment as well.

30 Points (Composition)

10 Points (Artist Statement)

**DISCUSSIONS:** Students will participate in 3 In-Class Discussions about their Formal Drawings and the Formal Drawings of their peers. These discussions will take place on the due dates of the 3 Formal Drawings and will be worth 10 points each.

**IN-CLASS EXERCISES:** Students will be graded on their participation in the course (attendance, working in class, etc.). A possible total of 30 points will be awarded in this category.

**GALLERY/VISITING ARTIST REVIEWS:** In an attempt to engage you with the artistic culture of Missoula, students will be required to visit three galleries/artist lectures during the course of the semester and then provide a short write-up of what they observed. These will be worth 10 points each and can be turned in during any point of the semester.

## TENTATIVE OUTLINE

### **SECTION ONE: DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES**

Tuesday, January 28 <sup>th</sup> :	Introduction to Syllabus, Supplies, Course Outline
Thursday, January 30 <sup>th</sup> :	Materials Demos, In Class Exercises
Tuesday, February 4 <sup>th</sup> :	Materials Demos, Object Studies
Thursday, February 6 <sup>th</sup> :	Materials Demos, Object Studies

Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>: Still Life #1  
Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>: Still Life #1

Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>: Still Life #2  
Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>: Still Life #2

**SKETCHBOOK #1 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS, FEBRUARY 20TH**

## **SECTION TWO: CONCEPT IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ART**

Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>: **STILL LIFE PORTFOLIO DUE**, Materials Demos, In Class Exercises

Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>: Materials Demos, In Class Exercises

Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>: Introduction to Project #1, Work on Project #1  
Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #1

Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #1  
Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup>: NO CLASS

Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #1 (GUEST INSTRUCTOR)  
Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #1 (GUEST INSTRUCTOR)

**SKETCHBOOK #2 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS, MARCH 20TH**

## **SECTION THREE: SOCIAL COMMENTARY IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL INDIFFERENCE**

Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>: **PROJECT #1 DUE, DISCUSSION #1**  
Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup>: Introduction to Project #2, Work on Project #2

Tuesday, April 1: NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)  
Thursday, April 3: NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #2  
Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #2

Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #2  
Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>: **PROJECT #2 DUE, DISCUSSION #2**

**SKETCHBOOK #3 DUE THURSDAY, APRIL 17TH**

## **SECTION FOUR: THE LOSS OF IDENTITY IN THE POST-POSTMODERN WORLD**

Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>: Introduction to Project #3, Work on Project #3  
Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #3

Tuesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>: Work on Project #3  
Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup>: Work on Project #3

Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>.  
Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Work on Project #3  
Work on Project #3

**FINALS WEEK:**

**During Finals Week we will meet as a class to have a final critique of your formal drawings and sketchbook assignments. If you have a conflict with the meeting time you will need to make arrangements with the instructor to schedule an alternative meeting time.**